54-1945

Negro Leaders

Louisiana Weekly 4-21-45

LEADERS are born, not made, is a true saying. They are recognized by their way of life, their ideals, their principles and their actions. They attract a following because of their sincerity, wisdom and integrity. They inspire confidence, faith and respect through the years they grow in the esteem of their followers commanding their loyalty. In the past, few Negroes have qualified as leaders, such as Frederick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Dubois and Harriet Tubman. New Orleans, La.

Today only Walter White and A. Philip Randolph have reached the leadership status of those mentioned above. There is no other term so loosely used as that of "Negro leader." In trying to analyze why the term is so loosely used, we find two types of people whom the masses of people assume are Negro leaders, namely, some Negro who by virtue of his contact with white people is designated by them as a leader of Negroes; second, a representative Negro whose opinions are his own and who is more or less an opportunist. To one who thinks, what makes a leader, is one whom people follow and believe in because of his unselfishness, honesty and sincerity of purpose in fighting for "first-class citizenship rights." There are few such persons who have the confidence and respect of the Negroes; therefore, as a group, we almost have no leaders mainly because we have not been impressed by the conduct of those aspiring for leadership. Hence, the two men who stand head and shoulders above the rest in the sense that they have a large following who believe in them implicitly and trust them all the way are White and Randolph. 4-21-45

The trouble seems to be that too many of the masses assume that certain representative people are leaders when they are actually representative Negroes. The real leaders of the masses have been ministers and the labor leaders. The labor leaders are the ones who can more truthfully be called leaders because they are leaders in their respective unions. However, with the CIO's Political Action movement as cue, these labor leaders are becoming interested in politics, civic improvement and other community problems by taking active parts in the community's affairs. The ministers are also beginning to see that they, too, have to take an active part in the civic, economic and political affairs of the community if they are to maintain aggressive and progressive congregations. Quite a few ministers have sidestepped the social, political and economic issues affecting congregations, while others have soft-pedaled them, with the real fighting ministers coming to the forefront for the people. 4-21-45

The combination of fighting labor leaders and fighting ministers, coupled with representative Negroes who have been tried and found working together, could weld together a central organization with the type of leadership that the local community needs. We have too many strong

little men. What we need is some big strong big men united in a central organization with a union of strong little men heading district organizations. The strong big men will guide the Negro citizenry to better schools, better health facilities, adequate recreational facilities, the ballot and better economic opportunities. We have what we need within our own group if it can only be coralled and harnessed to do the job which needs so badly to be done.

If such an organization is founded, we must be mindful hat it would take money to make it operate successfully or the good of the community. Just as the labor union ust collect its dues and the church collect its dues, so ould this organization have to collect dues. In other ords, to borrow a slang phrase, "we have to put our oney where our mouth is." We talk too much about lving our common problems, but seldom do we dig deeply own in our pockets to finance the solving of many of these oblems. A typical example of our laxity is found in the umber of graduates of Negro colleges who do not support he alumni associations of their own schools. Before the war we did not support the NAACP or Urban League as we should have, and they were doing a terrific job for the Negro masses in the matter of economic, political and civic rights denied them in contradiction to the Constitution of the United States. However, the war has brought a consciousness that we as Negroes are going to have to dig down deep in our pockets to finance these organizations to do the job that needs so desperately to be done. We cannot go on expecting other interested people to fight for the solution of problems that affect us, but we've got to put our money on the line so that we can afford to pay for intelligent and competent leadership. Men and women with intelligence and brains have to make a living, hence they go to work for a college, university, corporation, industry, etc., which pays them a commanding salary which forever forbids them from being aggressive and militant leaders (there are exceptions to the rule). If the case were different and we could be like the labor union who pays its executives substantial wages to fight tooth and nail for them, we could achieve many of our aims. It is along this line of thinking we must turn our thoughts. That of putting our "money on the line" for competent and intelligent leadership and organizing into one central organization, if for no other reason than self-protection. 4-21-45

The fine manner in which this community supported financially A. Philip Randolph's request that the local community raise $5,000 to help fight for a permanent FEPC bill is an excellent example of Orleanians putting their money where their mouths are. They presented the great labor leader a check for $5,000 a few weeks ago.

SOUTHERN SAY-SO

Pittsburgh Courier

Charley Houston Fought Five Years to Win Railroad Brotherhood Cases

1-13-45

By M. S. STUART

(The views expressed in this column are those of the writer and do not necessarily express the editorial opinion of The Pittsburgh Courier.—The Editors.)

MANY of the earlier race leaders rose from the ranks of the teaching and preaching professions, and their leadership was largely of a conciliatory, pleading type. With the lower level of mass intelligence obtaining in their day, it was less difficult for them to tower and win great distinction and wide acclaim than it is for the leaders of today. The type of leadership espoused by the leaders of the past was appropriate for the times in which they held the spotlight. But the higher general level of race intelligence now demands a more militant and effective type of leaders, because it is realized that Negroes must manifest a high degree of self reliance and independence if they are to appear logical in insisting on full equality of citizenship.

Mr. Stuart

This new type of leadership, with both the courage and the ability to wage battle for the opportunities to earn security instead of begging for it, is arising out of the ranks of at least three distinct racial classes: The legal profession, labor and business; and foremost in the ranks of the last named are the several great race newspapers, magazines and insurance companies.

1-13-45

CHARLES H. HOUSTON

This new leadership realizes that concrete results and a reputation of ability to fight and win them are of transcending importance. It is to be doubted that people of the race generally are adequately appraising the great importance of the legal victories being won by lawyers of the race. In the front ranks of these militant leaders is Charles H. Houston, of Washington, D. C. In two great victories—the Equalization of Teachers' Salaries and the Railroad Brotherhood cases—in which he took the initiative, the principles established in the decisions go to the very roots of economic conditions affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of Negroes of current and future generations. As regards the number of people who may be benefitted by the precedents established, no greater steps forward have been made since emancipation.

1-13-45

THIS piece is attempting to discuss the two victorious cases against the Railroad Brotherhoods and certain railroads. Let them be identified as The Tunstall and Steele cases. Patiently, doggedly, for about five years, Charley Houston has been digging and searching around in law books and Congressional enactments making preparations for these cases. He has traveled thousands of miles to talk to witnesses and secure information. He first filed a suit in the name of Ed Teague in the Federal court at Memphis, Tenn. Judge Boyd, of Memphis, quickly decided against Charley Houston's client. On appeal to the Sixth Circuit court at Cincinnati the decision of Judge Boyd was affirmed. But Charley was not discouraged. He started all over again, this time with Bester William Steele as a client. This required many more trips to Alabama and other places. Again the lower and Circuit courts rendered adverse decisions. But Charley knew he was right, and this time he sued out a writ of Certiorari by which he made his way to the U.S. Supreme court.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Labor fought a long time to establish the right to bargain collectively. Under that right representatives of unions make bargains with employers to regulate the wages and working conditions of all the workers in the enterprises. This prevents employers from lowering wages through competition of individual workers for the jobs. But strange as it may seem, the unions, at least some of them, as soon as they won protection from exploitation of the laborer, started discriminating against Negroes by barring them from union membership and then proceeding to make bargains that by slick devises cheat colored workers out of their seniority rights, their right to promotion and their jobs.

1-13-45

THE principle established in the victory against the Brotherhoods (units of organized labor) makes such discrimination invalid; and this principle, technically won against Railroad Brotherhoods, is very probably susceptible of application in all other fields where collective bargaining obtains.

54a-1945

NEGRO LEADERSHIP

New York Age

The world is crying for able fearless worthy leadership. This is true of our country, our state, our city. We are certain that many of our difficulties today might have been obviated had the people chosen a different type of leader to represent them. 2-10-45

We elect a president to speak for the nation, governors to speak for the states and mayors to speak for cities. Racial groups with particular problems requiring definite leadership to press for solution of them have no method of voting for leaders. They arrive either by their ability to make a success of their particular job and thus are selected to represent the group. Or, there is a class which, through egotism or sheer boldness, assume to lead or speak for a group.

In spite of criticism of Negro leaders, they have done a pretty good job with the available help at their command. Because of lack of finances which help make a leader fearless and free from unreasonable temptations, it has not always been easy. Many have fallen prey to their shortcomings; many have played into the hands of those who would betray the very group for which they were working.

Possibly, the most dangerous leaders the Negro has are those smart fellows who delve in every type of unfair practices and yet insist that they speak for the race and the ignorant fellow who sells his race for a mess of pottage and allows himself to be used as a stooge to hinder his fellowman.

It is not easy to get rid of those two types of leaders. They bob up where least expected and by captivating a few unsuspecting innocent people, place themselves in position of prominence which embarrass the race. 2-10-45

We must learn to reward those people who carry their responsibilities properly; we must be willing to refuse to allow people to represent our cause who do not respect themselves, who do not have the respect of both white and Negro people in a community. Otherwise, those who select unworthy leadership are put in the same class with them.

Eventually we hope to be rid of most of these people who impede our progress. Possibly father time will do the job, but in the meantime, while we are trying to do the best job possible in this all-important history-making era, let's put the best leadership forward.

—The Iowa Bystander

OUR LEADERSHIP

Savannah Tribune Ga. 1-18-45

Mr. John Young III is writing a series of articles covering a tour he is making through the south. He is interviewing leading white citizens, including governors, mayors, newspapermen and leading Negroes. He also samples sentiment among the common people. He is making some interesting observations regarding the political, economic, educational and health conditions as they are provided by local and state governments. He is especially collecting information which shows what the states are doing to prepare for the homecoming of the soldiers. A significant fact is the reaction of the ordinary, working classes of Negroes as to the leadership selected to represent them in affairs in North Carolina. He notes that these people feel that the men chosen in that state are too far removed from them to know what their problems are; that they are from among the upper brackets of the Negro population, and are not aggressive enough; that they are too passive in their representation; that they do not exert pressure enough; that they seem willing to wait on evolution to bring about desired change. This sort of charge against their leaders in North Carolina is not unique. Negroes elsewhere make the same charge. 1-18-45

The matter of leadership among and for Negroes is difficult. The problem of race adjustment has so many phases and is reacted to in so many different ways, that leadership to represent the various shades of beliefs is by no means easy. Certain groups believe that desired results will be better and sooner achieved by patiently waiting-waiting for white people to change their attitudes. Some white people believe this also. They become impatient with any effort to force earlier change. On the other hand, there are many Negroes who feel that they have been patiently waiting a long time already, and that it is necessary to bring pressure in order to get results, so they have organized various groups, and have elected to follow the type of leadership which believes likewise. They are committed to bringing all the pressure they can. Of course, they are opposed to anything which means violence. They intend to use all available channels of publicity in order to inform the general public of the indignities and inequalities Negroes suffer. They mean to keep before the country the justice of their claims. They hope to attract to their effort all liberal individuals and groups in order to secure for all citizens the enjoyment of the basic rights living in a democratic country promises. They know that even the laws of the land and the decisions of courts need the support of the public. Self appointed or imposed leadership is as distasteful to Negroes as is the "uncle Tom" type. What they want and need is wise, intelligent, respectful, persistent, aggressive leadership.

Earl Conrad

Chicago Defender

Negro Fighters for Freedom

A FEW WORDS about some "Unsung Americans Sung," as W. C. Handy has put it. We do not today know the names of many of those Negroes who lead the early insurrections against slavery in the 1600s and 1700s. We do know that in various parts of America, and in the West Indies, and in South America too, where slaves were imported, virile and principled souls in black skins struck back at their oppressors even though death to the slaves was often the only consequence. 7-7-45

Although we do not know the identity, cannot physically describe many and perhaps most of these stalwart spirits, we know that they were the founders of America's greatest tradition—the democratic spirit. Ex-Africans who had lived proudly in their native land, they fought against removal from their home soil; the revolted against the captains of the slave galleys; they insurrected on the plantations; they paved the way for the coming of Frederick Douglass, who would prophesy an America, white and black, free of oppression.

As the records of the historians grow, we know now that there were hundreds such revolts; and in the long run these political demonstrations bore fruit in the great civil conflict of 1861 and 1865. There were local leaders everywhere fighting against servitude: Cato, Gabriel, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner. Some of these uprisings were large-scale affairs that affected the national economy; and others were sporadic one-man, or two-man desperate attempts at self-justification. But each and all were blows at the myth of white supremacy.

Negro Never Docile

AFTER THE Civil War, when the South, with brutish violence put back the decision of history, by counter-revolution, and instituted a new pattern of perennial violence, local leaders of courage continued to assert themselves. There has not been a period of American history when the Negro has not fought.

In the retreating period of Booker T. Washington, young DuBois arose, and gave strength to the fighting spirit everywhere in Negro America.

This tradition goes on today, with a new and mighty force; with a force sufficiently great to make all Tories tremble North and South. I know this, for I have met many of the modern Catos, the modern Veseys, North and South. True, their names often are not nationally known; but it is in these local fighters largely that the future of Negro America lies secure.

In Detroit there is the valiant Snow Grigsby, whose pamphlet in the mid-thirties, "White Hypocrisy, Black Lethargy," shocked and aroused Detroit, paved the way for the New Negro in that city. 7-7-45

Fighters Extend Democracy

DOWN SOUTH, in Alabama, there is courageous John LeFlore. This Mobile man, leader of the NAACP there, has done work that is already written into the unwritten history of that state.

In Chicago there is Asby Carter, postal worker and YMCA secretary, whose indefatigable labors are known throughout that city even though not to the outside world so much.

The other day I met another such leader in the city of Newark, N.J. His name is Allen F. Harris. He is a tall man, physically capable, intellectually very supple. He has been jailed twice in Newark for his militancy; he has strengthened Negro spirit there and caused one judge to say, "Things aren't the same in this town since Harris started fighting."

I could name a phalanx of women such as these too, and shall one day soon.

It is in these men and women, in their silent local work; in their patient struggles, in their coming to grips with the evil immediately at hand, that there lies the major hope of extending the democratic traditions. Godspeed all the Catos in the fight !

Prof. Walter R. Chivers Says Negroes Need Leadership; Receives Award At Atlanta U.

N. Y. Age N.Y. NY

ATLANTA, Ga.—At the Atlanta University School Assembly on Friday, Professor Walter R. Chivers, well-known sociologist and columnist, asserted that "the Negroes greatest need is resourceful, creative and courageous leadership, and that race leaders must be masters of militancy." He contended that the isolation of Negro population areas tends to render conservative and to reinforce sterotypes of social action. Preceding the address, Professor Chivers received an award of $100 for his article "Teaching social Anthropology in a Negro College," which appeared in "Phylon" the Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture, in 1943. The award was made by Letter Magazine, through ite editor, Mrs. Ada P. McCormick. Dr. Ira De A Reid, editor of Phylon presented the check to Mr. Chivers.

7-28-45

Professor Chivers' subject at the Assembly was "Social Implications of Secondary Education for Negroes in the Deep South." He gave reasons for the complexity of the existing social pattern the lack of an educated ministry, and the changing philosophy of living, which has socialized human and group relations.

"Education holds the key to freedom from social slavery and secondary education, particularly, because it has the program, the clientele and considerable equipment and is without the parallel of demonstrationalism.

What the Negro race needs is a leadership willing to live dangerously, the speaker pointed out, and "it is still a dangerous undertaking in the deep South to teach Negro youth to want economic, p[illegible]l and social equality." "Yet, he continued, "until they have these rights they cannot be full citizens nor can they have the satisfying inner feeling of belonging."

7-28-45

Citing fear of losing a job as the reason many would-be leaders fail to follow a militant course of action, the speaker decared "there is a greater glory and reward in losing a job than holding it if men have a conviction based on a philosophy of life.

Professor Chivers closed by expressing the belief that to a large extent Negro secondary education in the South belongs in the field of social work "because it has yet to create the setting in which it might develop and grow in the fullness of its possibilities."